



STATE OF WASHINGTON

UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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UTC efforts result in nearly a half million dollars in credits and refunds for consumers

Energy companies drew the most consumer complaints in 2013

OLYMPIA, Wash. – Washington consumers in 2013 received more than \$450,000 in bill credits and refunds based on consumer complaints filed with the state Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) against regulated companies.

Total credits and refunds came to \$456,840 from complaints closed in 2013. Telephone companies returned the most money, followed by energy companies. Some of the money also benefited consumers who were unaware that issues raised by complaints applied to them.

In its annual analysis of complaints, released today, the UTC also found about half of the 1,298 complaints opened in 2013 concerned energy companies, with telephone companies a close second.

When combined, regulated privately-owned water, solid waste, moving companies, and airport shuttles accounted for just 10 percent of complaints.

Energy companies, which provide consumers electricity and natural gas, paid out \$92,880 in bill credits or refunds. Consumers filed 630 complaints against regulated companies, or about 49 percent of the total. The complaints largely involved disputed bills, disconnect threats, customer service, and quality of service.

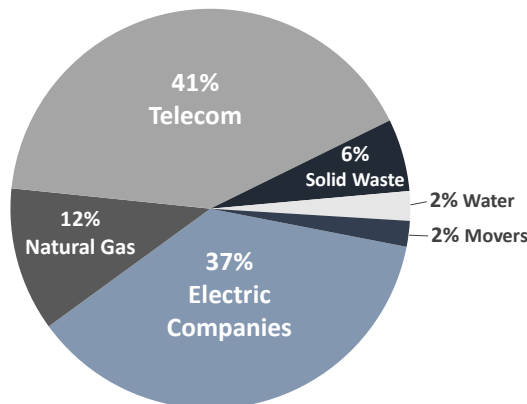
Telephone companies paid out the most in bill credits or refunds – a total of \$348,150. They were a close second in number of complaints, 533, about 41 percent of the total. The complaints mostly involved disputed bills, quality of service, customer service, and disconnections.

Consumers of privately-owned water, solid waste, moving companies and airport shuttles received a total of \$15,800 in refunds or credits. The 135 complaints ranged from 31 for water companies to just one for airport shuttles.

In handling these complaints, the UTC's consumer protection staff identified more than 2.8 million violations of state laws and rules. Issues identified in consumer complaints often lead to broader investigations of a company's business practices.

Consumer Complaints Filed in 2013

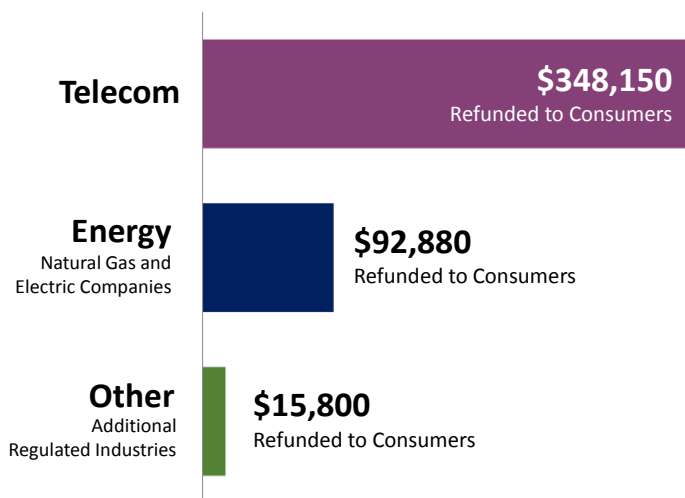
Percent of Complaints Separated by Industry



The UTC regulates the rates and services of telecommunications companies; investor-owned electric utilities, natural gas and water companies; garbage-collection haulers; residential moving and charter-bus companies; and commercial ferries. The UTC protects consumers by ensuring that utility and transportation services are fairly priced, available, reliable and safe.

Over \$450,000 Refunded to Consumers in 2013

Commission Investigations Lead to Companies Refunding Consumers



Editor's Note: Consumers can file a complaint against a regulated company by calling the Consumer Protection Help Line at 1-888-333-WUTC, e-mailing consumer@utc.wa.gov or filing an online complaint at www.utc.wa.gov/fileacomplaint.